

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**  
Office of Archives and History  
Department of Cultural Resources

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot, Additional Documentation**

Hamlet, Richmond County, RH0717, Listed 4/13/2006  
Nomination by Linwood King III and Sherry Joines Wyatt  
Photographs January 2006. unknown photographer



Façade view



Rear view

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot: Additional Documentation

other names/site number Hamlet Passenger Depot

### 2. Location

street & number 2 Main Street n/a not for publication

city or town Hamlet n/a vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Richmond code 153 zip code 28345

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination        request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets        does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant        nationally        statewide X locally. (       See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

  
Signature of certifying official

3/17/06  
Date

North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property        meets        does not meet the National Register criteria. (       See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

       entered in the National Register  
       See continuation sheet.  
       determined eligible for the  
National Register  
       See continuation sheet.  
       determined not eligible for the  
National Register  
       removed from the National Register  
       other (explain):

Name of Property

**5. Classification**

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private  
☒ public-local  
☐ public-State  
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register1**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION / rail-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION / railroad related  
SOCIAL / meeting hall  
RECREATION AND CULTURE / museum

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN / Queen Anne

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE; BRICK  
walls WOOD/Weatherboard & Shingle  
roof METAL/Tin shingle  
other WOOD/

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☒ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Hidden text

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

~~TRANSPORTATION~~  
ARCHITECTURE

see SLR at end  
of nomination

### Period of Significance

1900 - 1943

### Significant Dates

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### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Seaboard Air Line Railway

## Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☒ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
- ☐ # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
- ☐ Record # \_\_\_\_\_

### Primary Location of Additional Data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☒ Other State agency (NCDOT)
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.6 acres

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 618860 3860700  
Zone Easting Northing  
2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Zone Easting Northing  
4 \_\_\_\_\_  
See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Linwood R. King, III, Historic Preservation Specialist & Sherry Joines Wyatt, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization David E. Gall, Architect, P.A. date 2005

street & number 938 West Fifth Street telephone (336) 773-1213

city or town Winston-Salem state NC zip code 27101

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

### Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Hamlet

street & number 201 Main Street telephone (336) 924-6737

city or town Hamlet state NC zip code 28345

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to Keeper, National Register of Historic Places, 1849 "C" Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20240.

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### 7. Narrative Physical Description

#### *Exterior Description*

The following description is drawn from the 1971 National Register nomination for the Seaboard Coast Line Passenger Depot and the upcoming book, *The Architectural History of Richmond County, North Carolina*, edited by J. Daniel Pezzoni.<sup>1</sup>

The two-story, L-plan Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot in Hamlet, North Carolina, was built in 1900. It is dominated by a large, projecting circular pavilion at the angle of the L. Covering each wing is a flared gable roof that merges with the flared conical roof of the pavilion. The roof has a very deep overhang that continues as a pent across the gable ends. The overhang is supported by triangular brackets consisting of slender chamfered members. A strut bisects the triangle and terminates in an onion-shaped finial.

At the first story, a deeper pent roof extends along the trackside elevation of each wing and sweeps around the pavilion providing the sheltered porch or canopy that is a common feature in many railway stations. This exposed beam roof is supported by larger brackets, also with chamfered members. The lower chord of each bracket is curved to provide additional head space under the porch as well as serving to lighten the aspect of the heavy porch roof.

The depot is clad in German siding with decorative wood shingles sheathing the gable ends. The large, one-over-one, double-hung sash windows are set in molded surrounds with heavy sills and lintels. Because of additions and remodeling in 1916 and 1944, the doors and windows in the wings are irregularly spaced and in many cases differ from the original arrangement. The attic windows in each gable end are tripartite with an arched center window.

Between its construction in 1900 and its rehabilitation in 2003-2004 using funds provided by the federal transportation enhancement program and the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC-DOT), the depot had been altered several times. In 1916, a relatively seamless eighteen-foot frame extension was made to the wing that originally extended north. This addition continued the original German siding, fenestration patterns and aesthetic, roofline, and decorative bracketing of the eave overhangs. This early addition was retained during the rehabilitation. 1916 drawings and records in the North Carolina Utilities Commission reports serve to date this addition.<sup>2</sup> A small, two-story addition located at the rear of the depot, in the inside angle of the two wings, is also thought to date from c. 1916 when it was added to provide extra space to the ticket office on the first floor and a ladies restroom on

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<sup>1</sup>J. Daniel Pezzoni, *The Architectural History of Richmond County, North Carolina*, based on the work of Edward f. Turberg and others, (Rockingham, NC: Richmond County Historical Society, 2006 (anticipated)).

<sup>2</sup>Research conducted by NC-DOT Rail Division.

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the second floor.<sup>3</sup> This addition was demolished during the rehabilitation in order to provide better day light for the ticket office and second floor hallway.

However, prior to the move and rehabilitation of the depot, several additions extending from the rear (west elevations) of the depot were removed. Please see David E. Gall, AIA, Architect drawing labeled sheet A1.1 for a detailed plan indicating sections of the building removed. The largest of these additions was located perpendicular to the end of the wing that originally extended north. Built in 1944, this two-story, brick addition gave the building a U-shaped plan.<sup>4</sup> The addition was constructed to house additional Seaboard railroad offices and switching equipment. It was demolished prior to moving the depot in 2003, returning the building to its original L-shaped plan. The reasons for the demolition of these additions were several. First, from the beginning of the project there had been a desire on the part of NC-DOT and the City of Hamlet to return the station to its original condition. Further, the brick addition sat on a concrete slab foundation without a crawl space making moving it both complex and costly. NC-DOT, upon the advice of their architect and movers, decided those "funds were better utilized in restoring the original wooden structure to its 1916 appearance."<sup>5</sup> The small size of the new site, which already necessitated moving Main Street a short distance to the south, made moving the large addition much less attractive as well. The removal of the smaller additions was part of an effort to move the earliest parts of the building and to give the rear of the building, which now faces Main Street, as clean an aspect as possible.

### *Interior Description*

On the interior, the first floor interior plan was largely intact. The main waiting room in the rotunda and the ticket office in the interior angle of the L were clearly visible. The walls are plastered between vertically sheathed wainscot and a narrow molded cornice. The ceiling is beadboard and has heavy molded exposed beams radiating from the center, where there are two round supporting posts extending from the floor to ceiling. The ladies waiting room, rest rooms, and a baggage room occupy the original north wing and a waiting room for blacks, additional rest rooms, and baggage rooms were in the west wing.

The arrangement of the interior of the wings on the second floor had been considerably altered, primarily in 1944, to serve various uses. The hall in the original north wing, for

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<sup>3</sup>Information from an architectural investigation of the by David E. Gall, AIA.

<sup>4</sup>Construction drawings for the addition are dated 1943 and marked "completed as shown by Elliott Building Co., contractor, August 1944." Additional drawings dated 1944 and marked with a 1945 completion date illustrate interior renovations such as the reworking of the original stair in the north wing.

<sup>5</sup>Craig Newton to Ed Davis, email correspondence, 28 September 2005.

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example, had been widened at this time. This necessitated the reworking of the staircase in that wing to its current configuration. Several office walls in both wings were also shifted at this time and the stair in the original west wing was removed. Please see 1900 and 1944 construction drawings for more detailed information. The dispatchers office still occupied the second floor of the pavilion, which is finished much like the waiting room on the first floor, in 1971 although the space had been subdivided into four separate rooms. Offices for engineers, road masters, conductors, train masters, and superintendents lined the corridor of each wing and overlooked the two tracks.

### *Rehabilitation Description*

After the rehabilitation, substantially completed in October of 2004, the building appears much as it did in 1916. The building is situated on a new foundation that is lower than the original, which required a step up into the building. During the rehabilitation, the relationship between the sidewalk elevation and the interior finished floor was modified allowing most of the first floor doors could be wheelchair accessible.

The original exterior siding was repaired and or replaced with matching German siding as needed. The original standing seam metal roof of the rotunda and associated pent eave was retained and repaired. The gable roofs of the wings and the pent eave roofs were sheathed with new metal shingles matching the pattern of the early metal shingle roof which replaced the original wood shingles. Other exterior wood details and finishes were restored or replaced with matching materials as needed. The exterior color scheme was based closely on paint conservation analysis for the building's second color scheme applied in the 1910s. This color scheme is reflective of the Late Victorian design of the station expressed through a combination of dark gold body, dark green trims, scarlet accents, and a red roof.

On the interior, alterations and partitions not dating to the 1900 - 1916 building were removed, and the original beadboard wainscoting and ceilings, wood moldings, and plaster surfaces were exposed and restored. It should be noted that the 1940s staircase in the original north wing has been retained since replicating the original, steep, straight-run stair would have not met current building codes. Additionally, a new stair was constructed in the original west wing of the building, at the original stair location, although it was designed with an intermediate landing in order to meet codes.

Upgrades were incorporated into the building to meet current life-safety and building codes, including the introduction of an elevator and egress stair at the end of the original west wing; additional bathrooms in former office spaces of the building; the inclusion of service chases to serve updated plumbing, electrical, and an air cooling system; and the creation of a basement for the building to house updated sprinkler systems, an emergency generator, a



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modern boiler to serve the original radiators, and a museum space for a model rail display. Public spaces on the interior, such as the passenger waiting area and main hallways, were restored to their original appearance.

### *Original Site Description*

Before being relocated in 2003, the building occupied a one-acre site, also located in Hamlet's Main Street Commercial Historic District. The building was situated on a triangular parcel of land surrounded on all sides by active railroad tracks and roughly bounded by Main Street, Front Street, and Raleigh Street on the south, north, and west respectively. Although the building's address was 2 Main Street, it was virtually inaccessible from that street because of the railroad right-of-way. Please see David E. Gall, AIA Architect drawing labeled sheet A0.1 for a survey of the original building site.

The building was situated in an open, gravel and grass lot. The wing of the building that extended to the west had a one-story, open, frame baggage shed attached to its gable end.<sup>6</sup> The shed, which featured a concrete floor and exposed beams, was connected to a one-story brick building built in the early twentieth century. It is locally known as the credit union building.

The credit union has brick pilasters, small gabled projections at its west end, and a side-gable roof. It has been altered on several occasions with the infilling of windows and the addition of new windows. A similar building appears in a 1925 photograph and the building is shown in its current footprint on the 1949 Sanborn Map.<sup>7</sup> The credit union building remains in situ at the original site.

At the end of the original north wing, an open canopy with metal supports was constructed in 1944.<sup>8</sup> The roof of the shed was an inverted gable that is referenced in its common name of butterfly shed. The steel pipe column supports of the shed also served as downspouts carrying the water that collected in the valley of its roof. The butterfly shed sheltered the area along the tracks and led to a concrete Art Moderne-style entry that sheltered the stair to an underground passage, locally known as the subway. The subway entrance featured a sloping roof line, a recessed entry porch, glass block and Art Moderne banding near its base. The subway gave access to an island in the center of the tracks for easier passenger boarding. Neither the butterfly shed, nor the subway were moved during the rehabilitation project and have since been demolished. The subway tunnel had ceramic tile walls and has

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<sup>6</sup>Please see below for description of relocated baggage shed.

<sup>7</sup>*More than a Memory*, .

<sup>8</sup>The butterfly shed and subway both appear on construction drawings dated 1944.

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been filled with sand.

The length of the butterfly shed and the small size of the new site were incompatible preventing its relocation. The roof of the shed had asbestos raising hazardous materials issues. The subway shed, because of its concrete construction and use as the subterranean passage entry was also a poor candidate for moving. Further, as stated above, there was a desire to return the building to its 1900 – 1916 appearance, a period almost thirty years prior to the construction of these features.

Since its relocation, the depot occupies an approximately 1.6 acre site 210 feet southeast of the former location. Please see David E. Gall, AIA Architect drawing labeled sheet A0.3 for an illustration of the original and current building locations. Accompanying the building's relocation was the realignment of a portion of Main Street 130 feet to the south to provide adequate room for the building on the new site. The distance from the north curb of relocated Main Street to the depot is seventy feet.

The rail tracks directly adjacent to the new site are situated to the north and east of the building, as opposed to the south and east as originally located. The site is now bounded on the north by the railroad tracks and on the south by the relocated Main Street. The nearest built road on the east is Bridges Street, and on the west is Palmetto Wye Street.

The former site of the depot is still owned by CSX, Inc. All of the buildings on that site have been removed with the exception of the "Credit Union" building. Probably constructed in the early twentieth century, this one-story brick building was attached to the depot only by the frame baggage shed that extended from the end of the original west-wing of the depot. The credit union building is used by CSX as lay-over housing for employees.

### *Current Site Description*

The new depot site surrounding the building was designed to reflect the multiple uses now incorporated into the building (passenger station for Amtrak, a local community center, leased office / reception space, and expanded museum space). Site improvements include brick and stippled concrete walkways connecting all sides of the building, iron benches, period lampposts, waste receptacles, and landscaping. Across Main Street from the depot to the south is a new public park that connects the station to a pedestrian walk over a former rail trestle. The park, which is not included within the nomination boundary, has walkways, brick gateways, iron fencing, landscaping, and two train cars. The original baggage shed, an open frame structure that was attached to the end of the original west wing of the depot, has been reconstructed here as a covered entertainment venue.

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### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Significant Dates

1900 – 1943

#### Summary Statement of Significance

The Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot was built in 1900 as the flagship building for the then newly-formed Seaboard Air Line Railway. A series of railroad consolidations in the late nineteenth century led to the creation of the Seaboard Air Line Railway, and the selection of Hamlet as the line's hub came about because of its location at the intersection of the line's north-south and east west branches. The impact of the railroad on the town of Hamlet was immediate. The town's population quadrupled between 1900 and 1910 as service businesses for railroad passengers and railroad employees located in the town. Thus, the depot meets National Register Criterion A for its significance in the transportation history of Hamlet, a principal railroad interchange in North Carolina.

The Queen Anne-style depot with its signature rotunda is unique among North Carolina's railroad depots where one-story, modestly-detailed railroad stations are the norm. While the flared eaves and bracketed canopy became standard features for Seaboard Railway's depots, there are few examples that rival this station in size or the representation of the Queen Anne style. The Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot meets National Register Criterion C for its statewide architectural significance.

Criterion Consideration B is also met by the Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot, which was moved in 2003 to a compatible location. The original site of the depot is 210 feet directly to the north of its present location. The depot was also rotated ninety degrees to maintain the original orientation of the rotunda to the intersecting railroad tracks. Rehabilitation of the depot was precluded at its original location within a triangle of railroad tracks where safe pedestrian and vehicle access was impossible. The owner of the depot, CSX Corporation, planned to demolish the building.

The period of significance begins with the construction of the Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot in 1900 and ends in 1943. The end of the period of significance has been determined by the decision made during the planning phases of the restoration not to move the 1944 brick addition to the depot.

The building was incorrectly named the Seaboard Coast Line Passenger Depot in the 1971 National Register nomination. At the time of the historic designation, this was the name of the railroad company that owned the property. Between 1900 and 1945 the owner of the passenger depot was the Seaboard Air Line Railway. Thus, that historic name is now used for this additional

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documentation nomination. The building is locally known as the Hamlet Passenger Depot, therefore that name is recorded as an "other name" on the nomination form.

### *Historical Background and Transportation Context*

The following context is edited from the 1992 National Register Main Street Commercial Historic District nomination, with additional text from the 1971 depot nomination.<sup>1</sup> Other sources are noted in the footnotes.

The state government was heavily involved in early railroad building in North Carolina, beginning in the 1830s. The railroads greatly increased the markets available to farmers and timber men. Lower freight rates after roads such as the North Carolina Railroad (1849) were completed encouraged surplus agricultural production and helped to bring about industrial development in the Piedmont region. Yet, the Civil War and later Reconstruction-era bond scandals ended the state's involvement. The industry was privatized in 1870.

Between 1880 and 1900, privately-financed railway expansion in North Carolina linked towns not on the antebellum lines and made them important components in a system that rapidly expanded because of an influx of northern capital, the consolidation of many smaller lines into conglomerates, and a friendly legislature that granted special privileges and freedom from regulation to major railway companies. Starting in 1870, track mileage in the state more than doubled to a total of 3,001 miles in 1890, and in 1900 it was 3,800 miles. This system was integrated into a national network with many interstate connections.

These reorganizations resulted in three major railroad systems in the state: the 1894 Southern Railway Company that dominated the Piedmont and the western counties; the 1900 Atlantic Coastline Railroad that dominated the Coastal Plain; and the 1900 Seaboard Air Line Railway. The Seaboard Air Line emerged from railroad consolidations that occurred between 1873 and 1900. In 1873, the Seaboard and Roanoke from Norfolk, Virginia, acquired controlling stock in the Raleigh and Gaston and laid track from Raleigh to Hamlet on a line optioned by the Carolina Central in 1877. In 1880, Seaboard acquired control of the Carolina Central, and between 1881 and 1892, it built a new road from Monroe to Atlanta that connected to the earlier line from Wilmington to Hamlet to Monroe.

The Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot was built in 1900 as the flagship of the newly formed railway. The location of the depot in Hamlet was determined by two factors. First, the "Air Line" in the company name was evidence of their mission to build the straightest and, by default, fastest rail route. Secondly, the company was influenced to build in Hamlet, then Sand Hills, by a

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<sup>1</sup>"Main Street Commercial Historic District, 1992," North Carolina Historic Preservation Office.

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local land owner who offered his land for the right-of-way.<sup>2</sup> The depot property was purchased for a nominal fee from Frank Shortridge and his wife in February of that year. Frank Shortridge's father, John, had established Hamlet Woolen Tweeds (a textile company) at Marks Creek in 1874. It was through John Shortridge's influence that the first railroad of the area (Raleigh to Augusta) was laid through Hamlet. He and his family gave much of the right of way for this railroad. The new depot housed both the passenger facilities as well as the offices of the North Carolina Division of the Seaboard Air Line Railway until that division was abolished in 1944.

The impact of Hamlet's new status as a crossroads was immediate. The town had only been incorporated in 1897, but its population quadrupled from 639 to 2,173 between 1900 and 1910. By the mid-1910s, Hamlet was flourishing. On August 3, 1912, a special trade and industrial issue of the *Hamlet Messenger* characterized Hamlet as "The Town of Opportunities," and boasted that the town "... is on the main line of the Seaboard Air Line Railway and is the terminal of the North and South Carolina Railway [a small trunk line to Greenville, South Carolina]." Commercial goods, hotel accommodations, banking and professional services and entertainment venues were available not only for passengers traveling through town, but also to the contingent of railroad workers who were based there.

In fact, three large hotels, including the enormous and refined Seaboard Hotel, were constructed in short order. The Seaboard Hotel was the port of call for salesmen and others doing business in the area, and it was also a well-known restaurant that gave service to many notable people of the day. E.A. Lackey, who came to Hamlet about 1890 as a whiskey distiller, invested in the construction of many of the buildings on Main Street in Hamlet, including the very fine Opera House, which was completed in the mid-1910s. Lackey had seen the Wilmington Opera House and felt that Hamlet should have such a venue as well. Notable entertainers traveling from New York to Florida often gave performances in Hamlet that were attended both by local citizens as well as travelers staying in the hotels.<sup>3</sup>

Life in Hamlet was centered around the busy depot and was structured by the railroad's employee hierarchy. While Hamlet was a small town where people knew one another and attended the same churches, the status structure was part of daily life. Engineers and their wives were at the top of this hierarchy followed by conductors, brakemen, and so on down to the rail repairmen. The hierarchy was reinforced by the separate unions to which each group of railroad employees belonged. The railroad was pervasive and sometimes intrusive in town life. Women took note of the winds before hanging laundry for fear of returning to soot-blackened sheets. Railroad men's wives thought nothing of boarding the train for a day trip to Raleigh or Richmond to shop. Spectacular and tragic train wrecks are still well-remembered. The newsstand, which was located in the north wing

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<sup>2</sup>Neal Cadieu, telephone interview with Sherry Joines Wyatt, 10 January 2006.

<sup>3</sup>Cadieu and Norva Jernigan, telephone interview by Sherry Joines Wyatt, 10 January 2006.

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of the depot, was a place where Hamlet citizens could obtain the current Sunday papers from major cities such as New York and Washington.<sup>4</sup>

The close ties of the town's welfare to the railroad company were illustrated during the 1930s. As the railroad suffered decline due to the Great Depression and the rise of automobiles so did the town. Businesses, such as the Seaboard Hotel, closed and the heirs to E.A. Lackey, who was largely responsible for the development on Main Street, lost almost all of their Main Street holdings in 1935. As laid-off railroad employees left town four of the town's six dry goods stores closed.

During World War II, the station served as a link in the military routing of armed forces personnel. After the war, the station primarily functioned as a de-training stop for the resort areas of Southern Pines and Pinehurst. In July of 1967, another merger made the Seaboard Air Line, and thus the Hamlet Depot, a part of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad. In that same year, the railroad proposed to demolish the depot in favor of a more compact facility, but support from local citizens and railroad enthusiasts brought about the preservation of the building. It was adapted for continued use as a passenger station and a railroad museum was installed in part of the 1944 addition. In 1980, the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad merged with the Chessie System Railway to become CSX Corporation.

### Architectural Context

The 1992 nomination for the Main Street Commercial Historic District hints at the importance of the depot's architecture.

The Seaboard depot was one of a family of early twentieth-century depots that were erected in towns across the state as the importance of railway transportation grew in the early 1900s. Most of the depots erected in small towns like Hamlet were brick or frame and were linear in form and one story tall. In spite of the town's small size, Hamlet's importance as the junction of the Charlotte to Wilmington route as a stop on the major line from the North to the Deep South is exemplified in the grand, L-shaped building with its handsome pavilion waiting room and second story housing the railroad company's North Carolina division offices.

Using *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, edited by Catherine Bishir and Michael Southern, as an index of railroad stations across this region of the state, the 1992 characterization is accurate. Most of North Carolina's extant railroad stations are one-story and have an elongated form accented by wide eaves, often carried by heavy brackets to create a

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

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sheltered canopy for waiting passengers. Good examples are found in Apex, Carrboro, Burlington, High Point, Rural Hall, Thomasville, Statesville, Hickory, and Belmont. Although there are some nineteenth-century examples, the majority of the extant stations in the state date from the circa 1915 period.<sup>5</sup>

Considering stations remaining along the Seaboard Air Line Railway line, Bishir and Southern found that there were some that manifested a design "typical of the Seaboard line" with flared eaves and pendant-ornamented brackets. Examples are in Rockingham, Monroe, Sanford, Southern Pines and Aberdeen. The Charlotte Passenger Depot is among the largest of the remaining Seaboard stations. Built in 1896 and remodeled in 1916, the station was designed by C. C. Hook, a prominent Charlotte-based architect. Like Hamlet, it is a rare example of a two-story station. This stucco-sheathed building features a small, polygonal bay on its facade and modest Neoclassical Revival stylistic elements.<sup>6</sup>

More comparable to the Hamlet depot in scale and grandeur is the Salisbury Passenger Depot built in 1907- 1908. The monumental building was designed by Frank Milburn in the Spanish Mission style. It was the flagship building along the Southern Railway.<sup>7</sup>

Yet, neither the Charlotte nor the Salisbury stations feature the Queen Anne-style architecture found at Hamlet. While there are a few small depots in the state that feature Queen Anne-inspired ornamentation, such as that at Woodsdale in Person County, none display the exuberance and size of Hamlet.<sup>8</sup> The depot's stylistic detailing (including brackets, decorative shingles, and ornamental attic windows) is drawn from Queen Anne style motifs, but it is the circular rotunda that best speaks to the building's style. Also, the depot's two-wing configuration sets it apart from any other station in North Carolina. The long, narrow one-story form is ubiquitous among railroad stations across the state. Hamlet's rotunda and wings are unique in the impressive edifice they create, but also in the architectural comment they make about the importance of the railroad junction point they address.

### Criterion Consideration B: The Move and Rehabilitation of the Depot: 1993 – 2005

In 1993, after decades of limited use and maintenance, the state's only two-story, Queen Anne-style passenger station began a twelve-year relocation and restoration process. This

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<sup>5</sup>Catherine Bishir and Michael Southern, *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2003), 133, 238, 242, 342, 398, 411-412, 449, 459, and 484.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid, 291, 305, 264, 273, 275, 510 and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission "Survey and Research Report," accessed at [www.cmhpf.org](http://www.cmhpf.org).

<sup>7</sup>Bishir and Southern, 427.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 177.

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restoration was funded through the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NC-DOT) using Federal Enhancement Funds and was subject to compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended. All aspects of the National Register regulations and the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* were observed, including a study of the impact of the project on archaeological resources at the original and proposed new locations. Both the NC-DOT and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (NC-SHPO) concurred that the project would not disturb any archaeological resources. A *Memorandum of Agreement* between the Federal Highway Administration and the NC-SHPO was initiated in the fall of the year 2000 to guide the relocation and rehabilitation of the building.

The building's original location placed it between three active train lines bearing daily freight and passenger service. Safety concerns for the continued use of the building as an active station, as well as the rehabilitation of the building in such a location, prompted CSX Corporation to work with the City of Hamlet and the NCDOT to relocate the building to a location that provided public access to the building without the risks of crossing the railroad tracks. CSX planned to demolish the building unless it was relocated.

Plans for rehabilitating the depot were developed by Winston-Salem architect David E. Gall, A.I.A. Sedberry Construction, based in Troy, was selected as the contractor. William A. Matheson of Rockingham oversaw the work, and a local group known as Save Our Station (SOS) devoted itself to fundraising.

In order to closely retain the station's original orientation to the surrounding train tracks, the building was rotated ninety degrees to the west and then was moved 210 feet across the east-west tracks and placed on a new foundation. (See David E. Gall, AIA *Architect* drawing labeled sheet A0.3 for an illustration of the original and current building locations.) In so doing, the rotunda retained an orientation toward the intersection of the tracks. Additionally, the wings of the building retained a parallel orientation to the train tracks. The move was begun in March of 2003 with the stabilization of the building using steel beams placed under the frame and steel cables strung throughout the interior. The lower five feet of the exterior siding was removed to accommodate the steel support beams, and the window sashes and doors of the building were recorded and removed to prevent damage during the move. On March 16, 2003, the station was rotated ninety degrees in preparation for the move across the tracks to the new location. On April 4, 2003 the station was moved across the east-west tracks over a period of four hours. The station was then secured to a new concrete foundation.

To accommodate the new site for the station, a portion of Hamlet's Main Street was realigned 130 feet to the south in 2001. (See David E. Gall, AIA *Architect* drawings labeled sheet A0.1 and sheet A0.3 for pre- and post-move road locations.)

The station's new location retains its historic relationship to the intersection of train tracks known as the "diamond" that marked Hamlet as the historic hub of the Seaboard Air Line Railway



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between 1900 and 1943. The rotation of the station likewise maintains the station's viewing perspective and useful orientation to the train tracks as intended when the structure was built. The station's new relationship with Main Street places the rear of the building facing Main Street, as opposed to the front of the building as originally sited. This change in orientation with Main Street does little to diminish the significance of the building in the broader sense of its presence in Hamlet, as it still retains its historic relationship to the train tracks, which were the impetus for the original construction of the building.

During the rehabilitation process, it was decided by NC-DOT, after advice from their architect, building movers, and NC-HPO that it was cost prohibitive to move the 1944 brick addition to the original north wing of the depot. Instead, it was deemed more important to place funds towards a restoration of the building, as closely as possible, to its 1900-1916 appearance. The brick addition sat on a concrete slab foundation without a crawl space making moving it both complex and costly. The brick walls would have to have been separated from the foundation and suspended, risking cracking and collapse, during a move to a new foundation.<sup>9</sup> The small size of the new site, which already necessitated moving Main Street a short distance to the south, made moving the large addition much less attractive as well.

Other buildings that were located on the original depot site included a one-story, open, frame baggage shed that extended to the west of the original west wing. The shed, which featured a concrete floor and exposed beams, was disassembled and moved across Main Street from the current depot site to serve as an entertainment venue in the new city park.

The baggage shed had been connected to a one-story brick building that was built in the early twentieth century. It is locally known as the credit union building. The credit union building remains in situ and continues to serve as layover accommodation for CSX employees.

At the end of the original north wing was a 1944 open canopy known as the butterfly shed. The butterfly shed sheltered the area along the tracks and led to a concrete Art Moderne-style entry to an underground passage, locally known as the subway. The subway accessed an island in the center of the tracks for easier passenger boarding. Neither the butterfly shed nor the subway were moved during the rehabilitation project and have since been demolished. The smaller size of the new site did not accommodate the extensive length of the butterfly shed. Also, the roof of the shed had asbestos raising hazardous materials issues. Finally, the subway shed, because of its concrete construction and the subterranean passage entry, was a poor candidate for moving. Further, as stated above, there was a desire to return the building to its 1900 – 1916 appearance, a period nearly thirty years prior to the construction of these features.

In judging the impact on the building's integrity of the loss of the post-1916 site features, alterations, and additions it is important to consider the overall significance of the property. The

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<sup>9</sup>Craig Newton to Ed Davis, email correspondence, 28 September 2005.

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depot is significant for its role in the state's transportation history, how the creation of an important railroad intersection at Hamlet led to substantial development in the town, and for the statewide architectural significance of the depot's Queen Anne design. Although the post-1916 features helped us to understand the later history of the depot, they did not contribute to the building's distinctive original design. Also, it can be argued that it was the first forty-five years of the depot's presence in Hamlet that had the greatest impact on the development of the community and region. Thus, their removal has had a modest impact upon the overall integrity of the property.

The Hamlet Passenger Depot continues to serve passengers on the two New York-Miami Amtrak trains that pass each day. Some offices will be rented out and the second floor of the rotunda will provide community meeting space.<sup>10</sup> Plans for a new transportation museum to be located in the depot are also underway.

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<sup>10</sup>Pezzoni.

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### 10. Geographical Data

#### Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property includes approximately 1.6 acres as described by the heavy solid line on Hamlet Passenger Depot drawing L-1.1 as prepared by David E. Gall, Architect.

#### Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property encompasses property which provides an appropriate setting for the railroad depot in its new location.

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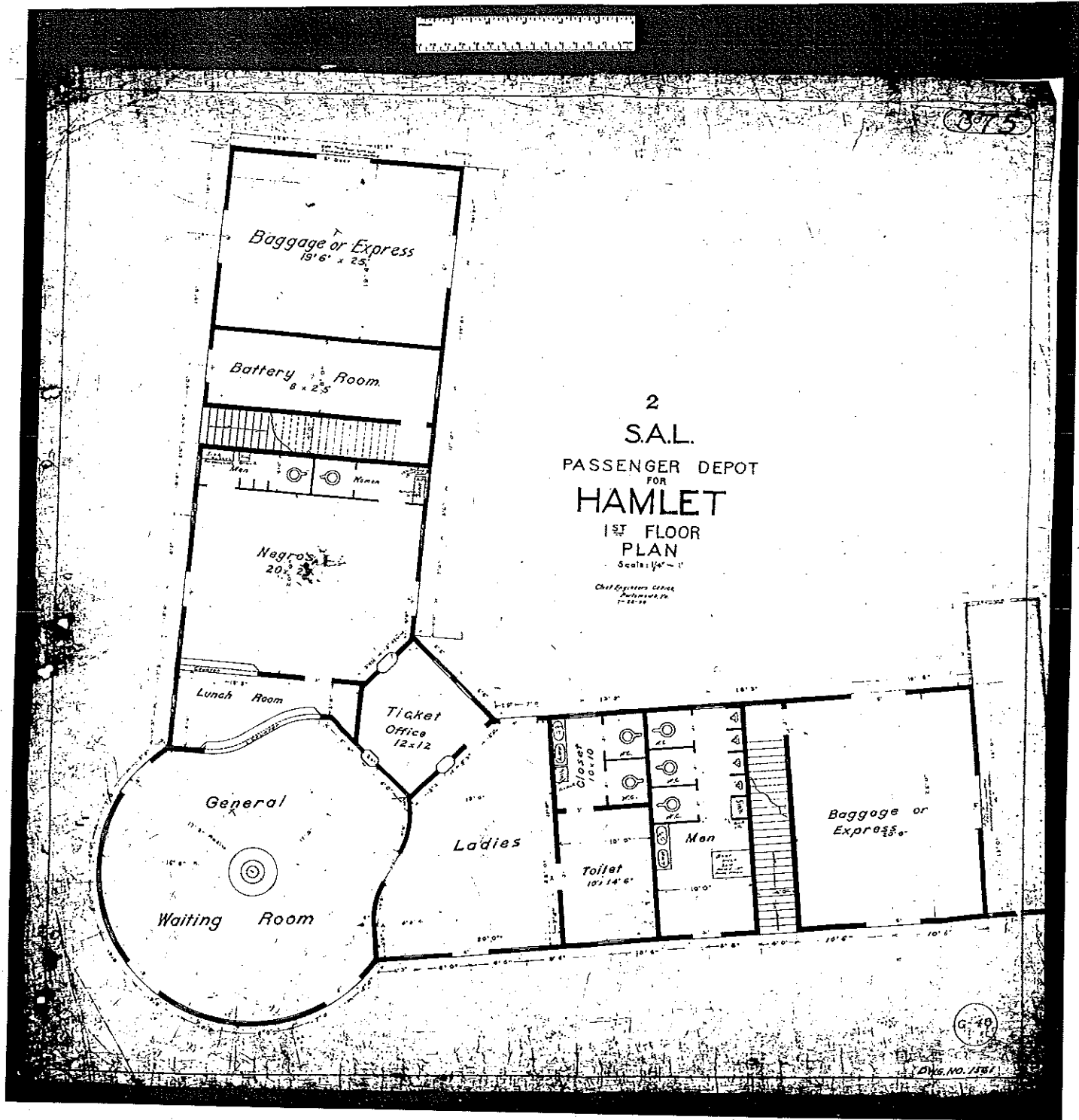
Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot,  
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Photographs by Ken Taylor, November 2005

The original negatives are located at the N. C. Division of Archives and History, Raleigh

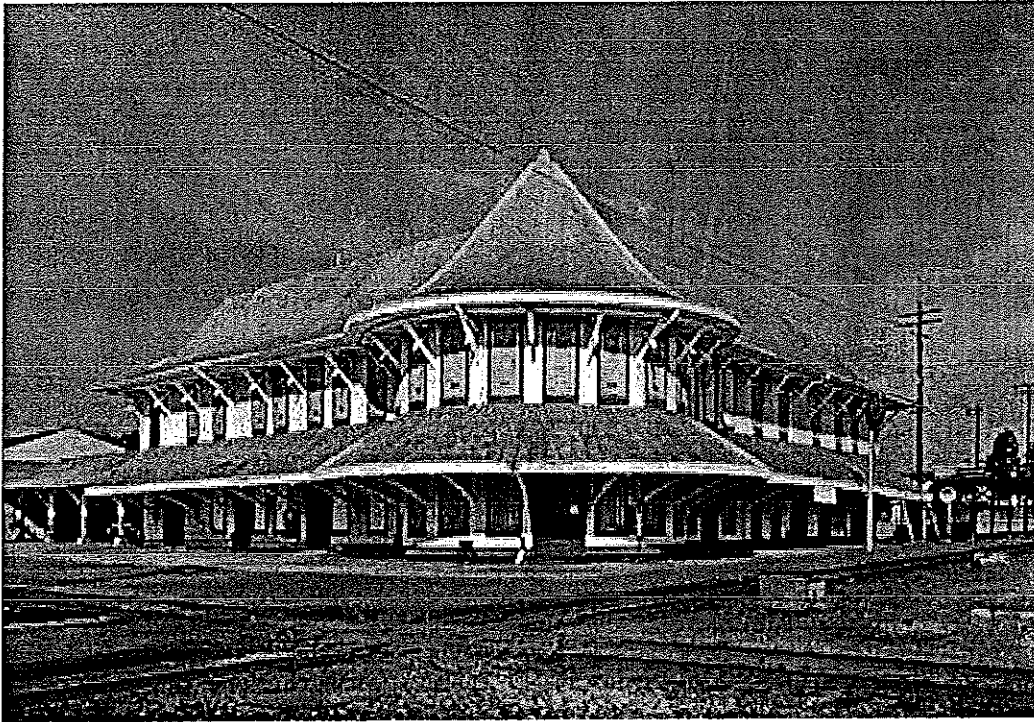
All room numbers refer to architectural drawings sheets A2.1 and A2.2,  
by David E. Gall, Architect, PA, December, 2002

1. View from railroad tracks - current south elevation
2. Rotunda
3. View from railroad tracks – current east elevation
4. View from Main Street – current west elevations
5. North elevation
6. West elevation
7. Interior – Lobby (Rm. 111)
8. Interior – former Ladies Waiting room (Rm. 109)
9. Interior – second floor Hall and Stair (Rm. 203)
10. Interior – first floor Rm. 108
11. Interior – former Baggage area (Rm. 103)



Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot  
Hamlet, Richmond County, NC  
Original First Floor Plan

Seaboard Air Line Passenger Depot, Additional Documentation  
Hamlet, Richmond County, NC  
Building at Historic Location, Prior to Relocation



View to North



View to Southwest - showing 1944 brick addition

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**SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD**

NRIS Reference Number: 71000617

Date of Listing: April 13, 2006

Property Name: Seaboard Coast Line Passenger Depot

County: Richmond

State: North Carolina

N/A  
Multiple Name

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

*for* Daniel J. Viscer  
Signature of the Keeper

April 13, 2006  
Date of Action

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Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 8. Statement of Significance

Criterion A is hereby removed. "Transportation" is hereby removed as an area of significance.

[This change was made in consultation with and approved by the National Register staff of the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.]

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The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

National Register property file

Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)